(d) the details of airports in the country which are at present being modernized and the status of their modernization;

(e) whether developmental works at some of the airports and more particularly at domestic airports is very slow and running behind schedule; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Airports Authority of India (AAI) have undertaken Terminal Building and air side works for modernisation of 35 Non-Metro airports by March, 2010. Additional 13 Non-Metro airports are also undergoing modernization in the same time frame. Further, AAI is also undertaking modernisation of existing Metro airports at Kolkata at a cost of Rs. 1942.51 crores and Chennai at a cost of Rs. 1808 crores for completion in a time bound manner. Expansion and modernization works of Delhi & Mumbai Airports are also progressing as per schedule under PPP model.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Snag in new boeing aircrafts

1575. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that smoke in engine grounded an Air India Flight AI 111 bound for London in an emergency situation at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport;

(b) whether another new Boeing aircraft bound for New York from Mumbai had also developed serious snag, fuel imbalance and had to be landed in emergency situation;

(c) if so, the reasons that new aircrafts are developing snags at very short span of time;

(d) whether the matter has been taken up with the Boeing authorities; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Air India Boeing 777-300 ER aircraft operating flight No. AI-111 of 11.10.2008 on Delhi-London sector returned to Delhi after take off due to smoke emanating in the aft cabin of Economy class seat during climb. The smoke ceased during descent. Overweight landing was carried out at Delhi and touch down was uneventful. On inspection, the smoke was found emanating from In-flight Entertainment Seat Electronics Box located below seat No, 50B.

(b) Another incident involving flight deviation of Boeing 777-200LR operating flight AI-140 on 21.8.2008 on John F. Kennedy International Airport to Bombay Sector was reported due to smoke emitting from Right Hand side rear cabin Seat Group 40 HJK.

(c) to (e) From 1.8.2007 to 22.10.2008, Air India's new Boeing 777-200LR and 777-300ER aircraft have done 3782 takes off and only three technical incidents have been reported, which counts for 0.08 technical incidents per hundred takes off. In the smoke incident, Air India has observed that the affected Seat Electronics Boxes are Thales 15000 IFE system components and located below Seat Groups in the Aft area where the aircraft contour narrows down. In this narrowed section, the width of seat-group reduced. Boeing in conjunction with Thales have come out with a solution in modifying the Seat Electronics Boxes to include a thermal fuse which would cut off power before emanating smoke, changing the potting material of the inductor and changing the existing capacitor to polymer micro capacitor.

Boeing will incorporate the above modifications on all the new B777 aircraft which are to be delivered to Air India from April 2009 onwards and the modification on the existing aircraft will be carried out by Air India on receipt of modification Service Bulletin from Boeing.

Cooch Behar Airport

1576. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Cooch Behar Airport is ready for commercial operations; and

(b) if so, the time frame for commercial operation of Cooch Behar Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Cooch Behar Airport is ready to accept commercial operations with a prior notice of ten days. However, it is upto the commercial decision of various airlines to operate scheduled services to and from Cooch Behar.

Financial crisis of domestic airline companies

1577. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the domestic airline companies are facing huge financial crisis on account of soaring jet fuel prices and that domestic carriers are operating at a very high cost investment which is not sustainable;

(b) whether Government has plans to bail-out the domestic aviation industry; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has taken various steps to help the domestic aviation industry which *inter-alia* are as under:

(1) Custom duty on import of ATF has been abolished.

(2) The State Governments are being persuaded to reduce the sales tax on ATF. Government of Andhra Pradesh and in certain cases Government of Rajasthan have reduced the sales tax on ATF